

Message Text

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ACTION ORM-01

INFO OCT-01 DHA-02 ISO-00 SS-15 PM-04 SP-02 L-03 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 ITFE-00 SCA-01 NSC-05 H-02 IO-10 EA-07

EUR-12 DODE-00 /072 W

----- 090983

R 041026Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5190

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 VIENTIANE 5486

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, UNHCR, VS, HK

SUBJ: UNHCR VERSION OF PROBLEMS WITH SAIGON-HONG KONG FLIGHTS

REF: A) HONG KONG 10160

B) HONG KONG 10004

C) HONG KONG 9907

D) VIENTIANE 5372 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY UNHCR OFFICIAL WHO WAS INVOLVED IN LAST WEEK'S UNSATISFACTORY SERIES OF FLIGHTS BETWEEN SAIGON AND HONG KONG HAS GIVEN US HIS VERSION OF THE EPISODE. HE PLACES MUCH BLAME ON VIETNAMESE BUT ALSO EXCORIATES HONG KONG GOVERNMENT FOR ITS ALLEGED ATTEMPT TO PRESSURE UNHCR INTO CARRYING VIETNAMESE WOULD-BE REPATRIATES BACK TO SAIGON IN ADVANCE OF PRG DECISION TO ACCEPT THEM. AS A RESULT OF UNHCR DISSATISFACTION WITH BOTH HKG AND PRG, THERE WILL EVIDENTLY BE NO MORE FLIGHTS BETWEEN THE TWO CITIES (OR BETWEEN SAIGON AND VIENTIANE) FOR THE TIME BEING. END SUMMARY.

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1. UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE ALEXANDRE CASELLA CALLED AT

EMBASSY SEPTEMBER 1 TO GIVE HIS ACCOUNT OF THE CONTRO-
VERSY SURROUNDING UNHCR FLIGHTS BETWEEN SAIGON AND
HONG KONG PREVIOUS WEEK. CASELLA WAS ANXIOUS THAT
USG HAVE HIS VERSION.

2. ACCORDING TO CASELLA, PRG FOR REASONS THAT ARE
STILL NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR TO HIM HAD NO RPT NO PASSEN-
GERS READY TO DEPART AUGUST 26 OR THEREAFTER,
ALTHOUGH HE THOUGHT HE HAD MADE FIRM ARRANGEMENTS IN HANOI
THE PREVIOUS WEEK FOR FIVE FLIGHTS EACH WAY, PASSENGERS
OUT AND MEDICIMH0"8\$*VR ZJW;<@)F0KU/VA88DHFDA-&U22HYUM\$/.5"U8<TQE1(FA,0JGW(53@ 8Y@<K,BG8@PAGA!H>;+((U!
8#C66#,8-
(RFQ&V)?
(# -PVT,PK"SRH"<C\$_GE@/+@D*1A#E,@I@37 4YU3TR,(#14U#ID AW
P1HK(F6W!QE
16W
H!DUW)@B9#EIW-3GEC2J=GRC
4GGE*F6#
3WNV@*K;/G.&>
MNG)FBP2G
A!\$ CX;UR(7 0+Q(KRF/(P*9|QF7FF!L6*J
H4<5H(9Q\$)_6?><@
U;B1*GW;C4<*<\$7P.*W!DM0,1U1I\$P"V886M
Q9W-P@
QM/,V_@D!J4MA20F!U_J|
ZK52?:C
\$F-(4GF_-RR ?
+M@H"A 1EU/&?2+

ADP000

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ACTION ORM-01

INFO OCT-01 DHA-02 ISO-00 SS-15 PM-04 SP-02 L-03 CIAE-00

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R 041026Z SEP 75

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 VIENTIANE 5486

6. AT LENGTH UNHCR CAME OUT FROM UNDER HKG THREATS AND PRESSURES,BUT WHAT CASELLA DESCRIBES AS "DELIBERATE HARASSMENT" CONTINUES. HKG WOULD NOT ALLOW LOADING OF MORE THAN A FRACTION OF MEDICINES DESTINED FOR SVN (REF A);MANAGED TO HAVE A GROUND SERVICE VEHICLE RAM ONE OF CARAVELLE'S ENGINES, ALTHOUGH ONLY MINOR DAMAGE TO COWLING RESULTED; REFUSED TO CHANGE TWO WHEELS ON CARAVELLE, WHICH THEREFORE HAD TO BE DONE IN SAIGON; ETC

7. THROUGHOUT HIS DISPUTE WITH HKG CASELLA TOOK PAINS TO KEEP GENEVA AND THE VIETNAMESE INFORMED; IT WAS 80-MINUTE TELECON WITH GENEVA THAT OBLIGED HIM TO MISS PROMISED MEETING WITH LAHIGUERA OF CONGEN, FOR WHICH HE APOLOGIZES. HE BELIEVES HE CONVINCED VIETNAMESE (WHO HE SAYS OF COURSE DESERVE MUCH BLAME THEMSELVES) THAT UNHCR WAS NOT RPT NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR NEW PROBLEMS IN HONG KONG AND IS SATISFIED THAT SAIGON-HONG KONG FLIGHTS COULD BE REINSTATED. HOWEVER, AS HE ALSO TOLD HONG KONG (REF B), HE CLAIMS TO HAVE MADE CLEAR TO PRG OFFICIALS IN SAIGON THAT UNHCR IS NOT RPT NOT INTERESTED IN MAKING FURTHER FLIGHTS IF ONLY PURPOSE IS TO
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CARRY CARGO INTO SAIGON; THERE WILL HAVE TO BE OUTBOUND PASSENGERS TO JUSTIFY FURTHER FLIGHTS, AND THIS APPLIES TO SAIGON-VIENTIANE ROUTE AS WELL.

8. CASELLA INTENDS TO DEPART VIENTIANE FOR BANGKOK ON OR ABOUT SEPT 3 TO PARTICIPATE IN HIGH COMMISSIONER'S VISITS TO THAILAND, LAOS AND VIET-NAM, AFTER WHICH HE HOPES TO TAKE BRIEF LEAVE IN EUROPE BEFORE RETURNING TO SEASIA AND, HE HOPES, EVENTUALLY OPENING UNHCR OFFICE IN SAIGON (VIENTIANE 5456). HIGH COMMISSIONER'S SPECIAL ASSISTANT ZIA RIZVI REMAINED IN HANOI THROUGH SEPT 2 DRV ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS, ALONG WITH UNHCR HANOI REP DARRYL HYUN HAN. RIZVI, LIKE CASELLA, PLANNED TO RETURN TO BANGKOK THIS WEEK TO BE ON HAND FOR HIGH COMMISSIONER'S VISIT.
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